

Nebraska Volunteer Fire Departments

Several months ago we wrote to each volunteer department in the state, asking for a list of the officers of the departments, with a report of the equipment and other items of interest. While all of the departments did not answer, we received enough to make some very interesting reading. The reports rendered to us are given herewith:

Alliance Volunteer Fire Department.—There are 75 active members in the department and a number on the waiting list. The department is housed in the commodious city hall, the club rooms with shower bath and gymnasium fixtures being on the upper floor. The combination auto truck, hose carts and hook and ladder truck are on the first floor, facing large sliding doors, balanced with weights. Besides the paid driver of the truck, three other volunteers sleep in the quarters provided in a separate room directly behind the room occupied by the trucks. The Alliance department has a large swimming pool, erected during 1915 with funds subscribed by members of the department and with material and labor which were donated. This swimming pool is heated by a steam coil and is constantly used during the summer months. Firemen have free use of the pool, while a nominal charge is made to the public, excluding children, who are admitted free during mornings. Fire alarms are given until 10 o'clock at night by siren whistle and fire bell. From 10 o'clock at night until 6 o'clock in the morning no public alarm is given unless the fire gets beyond control of the night crew of four who sleep at the quarters. So far, although the truck has been installed over a year, it has not been necessary to sound the public alarm after 10 o'clock. Officers of the department are: Lloyd C. Thomas, president; Penrose E. Romig, vice president; Percy Rolfson, secretary; Dr. George J. Hand, treasurer; Charles Hill, chief; Leonard Pilkington, assistant chief.

Bellwood Fire Department.—At the annual meeting of Bellwood Volunteer Fire Department, held November 1, 1915, the following officers were chosen to serve: H. A. West, chief; D. E. Hurkey, assistant chief; Roy Day, secretary and treasurer; J. B. Reemts, D. H. Tefel and J. P. Delaney were elected trustees. J. P. Delaney, A. T. Curtis and J. B. Reemts were appointed on the examining committee; T. Tox, L. Loveliss and Ray Clossen appointed on the grievance committee; and D. E. Hurkey, A. G. Peck and Joe McGaffin on the finance committee. This department was organized March 25, 1913, incorporated March 25, 1913, and now has 37 active members, meeting regularly on the first Monday of each month. Practice on the second and third Tuesdays of each month. The attendance at each meeting is large. Equipment includes 800 feet of 1 1/2 inch No. 2 Mill hose, one chemical engine, one gasoline engine, bell on 40-foot tower (which cost \$110), water pressure 80 pounds, 300 feet water mains and 3 hydrants. Value of property belonging to department, \$50; value of property used by department, \$2750. Number fires in 1914, four, amount of damage, \$450. Value of buildings before fire, \$35,000. Amount of insurance tax collected last year, \$70. Cash on hand June 7, \$75. 40 feet extension ladder, a ladder wagon and a hose cart.

Broken Bow.—Equipment consists of one Anderson combination hose and chemical wagon, one hook and ladder truck, two hose carts and four thousand feet of hose. This is all stored in the basement of the city hall, and the department also has a furnished room, used as a meeting place and lounging room by members of the organization.

Bradshaw.—A. B. Turner, president; J. T. Hampton, vice president; I. H. Johnson, chief; H. E. Palmer, assistant chief; C. E. Evans, foreman; C. B. Palmer, Jr., treasurer; C. A. Slinger, secretary. This department was organized January 3, 1908, by the following members: A. B. Turner, Wm. Sirrs, Edwin Miller, C. E. Trump, C. W. Gardiner, Harry E. Palmer, F. E. Bowes, Claude McCoy, W. H. Mason, J. E. Selover, I. H. Johnson, J. E. Myers, Sam Belcher, T. A. Hutton, R. W. Taylor, J. T. Hampton, D. A. Sbardall, C. B. Palmer, Jr., C. D. Coburn and J. B. Goodridge. The department at first consisted of two hose companies which were consolidated a short time later. Early in the year 1909 the members, realizing the need of a suitable meeting place, circulated a petition among themselves and the citizens, for the purpose of erecting a building—the result is a neat little brick building, entirely out of debt. Equipment includes 950 feet of good hose, 3 nozzles, a hook and ladder truck with 60 feet of ladders.

Crawford.—The Crawford department has 50 active members. It is equipped with hook and ladder trucks. Alarm is given by bell and whistle. The water works are gravity pressure, with direct pressure of 80 pounds for fires. The department is now housed in the new city hall, recently finished. It is equipped with shower baths and other modern

conveniences. Officers of the department are Clyde J. Hornsby, president; Thomas Beans, vice president; L. M. Davis, secretary; Clyde Beckwith, treasurer; William Sherrill, chief; Dr. A. Sprague, assistant chief.

Columbus.—Organized August 23, 1873, and has been in continuous service since that time, having on the active list of members seventy-two volunteers, who have uniforms. The following companies compose the Columbus Fire Department, namely: Hose Company No. 1, Hose Company No. 2, W. Y. Bessell Hose Company, Chemical Engine Company and Pioneer Hook and Ladder Company No. 1. The officers of Columbus Fire Department are: President, G. M. Matson; vice president, Bert L. Parker; secretary, C. S. Kenoyer; treasurer, Arthur Vierquitz; chief, Bert J. Galley; assistant chief, Will F. Plagemann. Officers of Hose Company No. 1: President, Arthur Schack; vice president, A. H. Vierquitz; secretary, Henry Wolfe; treasurer, A. W. Kummer; foreman, Gus Boettcher; assistant foreman, Paul Pfeiffer. Hose Company No. 2: Foreman, Otto Johannes; assistant foreman, Walter Vierquitz. W. Y. Bessell Hose Company: President, Fred Burgener; vice president, Clarence Cornell; secretary, C. S. Kenoyer; treasurer, E. R. Launer; foreman, C. S. Kenoyer; assistant foreman, Clarence Cornell. Chemical Engine Company: Foreman, W. Carl Rector; assistant foreman, Clarence Umland. Pioneer Hook and Ladder Company No. 1: President, John Stanzel; vice president and foreman, Herman Kaufmann; first assistant foreman, Julius Speeher; second assistant foreman, Herman Wolfe; secretary, Guy M. Matson; treasurer, Wm. F. Plagemann. Equipment consists of one combination chemical and hose motor-propelled Seagrave, one Seagrave hook and ladder truck (horse drawn), two hose carts (each carrying 650 feet hose), one emergency hose cart, 450 feet rubber hose, 3000 feet 2 1/2 inch cotton covered hose, fire alarm system (special telephone alarm), also fire whistle and bells, water works system, electricity and steam direct pressure at fires 90 to 100 pounds, mains and hydrants (12 miles), size 18, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4; 73 hydrants and 12 steamer connections.

Belgrade.—Organized January 22, 1912, with a membership of 25, consisting of two companies of 12 each and a chief. Officers are: President, Bob Dapt; vice president, N. J. Penfield; secretary, H. T. Jackson; treasurer, F. W. Brown; chief, A. J. Ruzicka; assistant chief, H. J. Philamela; trustees, D. M. Dodge, E. A. Andrews and Chas. West. The department has the following equipment: two hose carts, 1000 feet of hose, two Pyrene extinguishers, extension ladder, rubber coats, axes, and a fire bell.

Bloomfield.—Organized January 24, 1902. Equipment consists of two hose carts, 1200 feet of hose, one hook and ladder cart, one sixty-gallon chemical engine. The department has a membership of thirty-two active members. Officers are: President, A. F. Heiters; vice president, R. W. Hugh; chief, E. H. Berryman; assistant chief, Henry Wagner; secretary and treasurer, H. F. Cunningham; board of directors, N. N. Baker, W. E. Graves, A. H. Lux. In Chief Berryman the department claims the distinction of having the oldest and the best fire chief in the state, he being sixty-four years of age, and can run hundred yards in twelve seconds. Bloomfield is preparing to build a city hall to cost \$8,000, of which the department donates \$650.

Cedar Bluffs.—Organized in 1898. The officers are: Chief, August Ostlund; treasurer, A. F. Bockemuehl; secretary, J. H. Mackprang. The equipment includes two 55-gallon chemicals, two hose carts, 1250 feet hose, one hook and ladder truck.

Cedar Rapids.—This department has 24 members in good standing and holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month. Members missing two consecutive meetings are fined 25 cents—and the fines are collected. Officers are: President, W. G. Green; secretary, D. A. Beach; chief, F. J. Baum. Equipment consists of two hand hose carts and hook and ladder wagon, bell used for alarm. Also owns a piano in city hall, and grandstand at city ball park.

Crete Volunteer Fire Department.—Organized 1888, reorganized 1903. Number of members, 50. Officers are: President, E. E. Eckert; vice president, Paul Lutz; secretary, L. C. Dredla; treasurer, F. J. Kobes; chief, Frank Dredla; assistant chief, Ham Dillon. Foreman Hose Co. No. 1, Ed Aysatka; assistant foreman, Wm. Brauer. Foreman Hook and Ladder No. 2, Howard Denny; assistant foreman, Jerry Elias. The equipment consists of 4000 feet of hose, 2 hose carts, 1 hook and ladder, rubber coats, gloves and boots for all members, uniforms for all members, 26 miles of water mains, reservoir with 75-pound pressure. Meetings are held every second Tuesday of each month.

Fremont.—The Fremont department

is the largest volunteer department in the state, having 190 active members. It has two auto fire trucks, hook and ladder, hose carts and hose wagons. Alarm is given by telephone and whistle. Fire protection is by water works with direct pressure of 100 pounds. Harry J. Hauser is chief.

Malmo Volunteer Fire Department.—First established December 20, 1911, with an enrollment of 14 members. In the fall of 1914 the town of Malmo built a cement block for the benefit of the fire department, and in this building the firemen hold their meetings and keep their apparatus. At the present time there are twenty active members, and the officers are as follows: Chief, H. W. Olson; assistant chief, J. H. Holtorf, Jr.; president, Erick J. Erickson; vice president, Thos. Holtorf; secretary and treasurer, Emfred Potadle; foreman, Alfred Brodahl; assistant foreman, Ernest Holtorf; sergeant-at-arms, Harry Lyon; police, Art Berggren and D. A. Anderson; trustees, Pearl Saum, H. W. Olson and Jerry Holtorf. Equipment consists of a 32-foot ladder with a truck, 1 hose cart with 600 feet of hose, 2 respirators, and a 30-foot tower, recently erected, within which the fire bell is hung.

Neligh Fire Department.—Neligh department was organized in 1888, having a membership of 35, and all meetings well attended. The officers are as follows: Chief, Geo. Ferguson; president, Ed Dewey; vice president, L. E. Jackson; secretary, E. W. Watters; treasurer, Chas. Pagel; foreman, L. E. Haberstrok; assistant foreman, Geo. Ziemens; captain of chemical department, J. Amer. Equipment comprises 2 hose carts, 1200 feet of hose, 1 chemical engine, 4 Pyrene extinguishers, 1 electric siren whistle and 1 bell.

The Loomis Volunteer Hook and Ladder Company.—Organized May 12, 1911. For three and one-half years after its organization there was fortunately no demand for its services. On November 21, 1914, a disastrous fire occurred in which the department did efficient service. Again, on the evening of December 4, 1914, the Loomis Mill was burned. This fire had gained such a start when discovered that it was utterly impossible to extinguish it, but in confining the blaze to the structure where it originated and saving other property menaced, the department accomplished a most difficult task at great personal risk. Efficient service was also rendered at the fire which destroyed the Boien blacksmith and repair shop in February, 1915. Again the blaze was confined to the building where it started and valuable structures nearby thus saved. The department is divided into two divisions, Nos. 1 and 2, each of which chooses its own officers. The present officers of the company are as follows: Chief, C. M. Bruner; assistant chief, Robt. Weissenfluh; secretary and treasurer, F. E. Young. Officers of divisions: No. 1, foreman, F. E. Young; assistant foreman, S. C. Carlson; nozzleman, J. N. Lundin; assistant, M. Abramson. No. 2, foreman, A. W. Lappart; assistant foreman, Neis Hendricks; nozzleman, C. A. Brags; assistant, W. C. Seeman. Equipment of the company consists of 2 chemical fire engines of 40-gallon capacity, extension ladders, fire hooks, and other necessary equipment.

Deshler, Nebr.—This volunteer department consists of two companies, each having a roll of 22 members. The department officers are as follows: Chief, Fred Buntmeyer; assistant chief, Harry Grebe; secretary, F. E. Hemenover; treasurer, Henry Sittler. Each company has officers namely: Captain, assistant captain, secretary and treasurer. The equipment comprises 2 hose carts each with 500 feet of hose. Regular monthly meetings are held by each company and by the department.

Dodge Fire Department.—On June 4, 1915, the eighteenth annual installation of the officers was held at the city hall, and the following were elected: President, J. B. Miller; vice president, Jos. J. Ruzicka; secretary, G. J. Bormeyer; treasurer, Wm. E. Vlach; chief, Guy M. Porter; assistant chief, Ray Hall. After the usual business meeting a luncheon was served and the evening closed with songs by a chorus. The equipment includes 2 hose carts, a hook and ladder truck, 1000 feet of hose, and all equipment that is necessary to make up an up-to-date fire company.

Emerson, Nebr.—Organized May 25, 1903, this volunteer department is now divided into two companies, and consists of 29 members. The officers are: President, James A. Ireland; vice president, Chas. A. Beiersdorf; chief, Ernest Enke; assistant chief, H. G. Luth; secretary, Ego. H. Haase; treasurer, H. H. Stoise; captain company No. 1, Lee J. Wood; assistant captain, C. W. Harris; captain company No. 2, C. A. Beiersdorf; assistant captain, E. C. Lenderink. On July 11, 1905, a contract was let by the department for a building for its use, and a two-story brick building 24x40 feet was erected at a cost of \$2000. The first story is used for the storage of the department's

equipment and the second story for its meetings. The equipment consists of a hook and ladder wagon, a hose cart and a chemical cart and 800 feet of standard hose. Emerson has about 2 1/2 miles of water main. Fire loss very slight since the existence of the department.

Hardy Hose Co. No. 1.—Organized February 2, 1911, and has 19 active members. Officers are: President, J. B. Barton; vice president, P. Q. Chambers; secretary, C. L. Cramer; treasurer, J. C. Gavin; chief, Geo. S. McDowell; first assistant foreman, D. Chambers; second assistant foreman, W. H. Scott. Equipment consists of 500 feet of 2 1/2 hose, one hose cart, and good air pressure system. Have had twelve fires since being organized, resulting with a loss of \$5,710, mostly covered with insurance.

Lexington Volunteer Fire Department.—Organized in 1891 with a bucket brigade of 38 men and in the fall of the same year the water works were installed. At present there are 65 members in good standing, all fully uniformed. The officers are as follows: Chief, W. H. Tillery; assistant chief, Robert Rodebaugh; secretary, C. H. Mallett; treasurer, Isaac Nisley; attorney, I. J. Nisley; publicity reporter, C. C. Corder. The board of control consists of foreman of hose company No. 1, D. C. Mullin; foreman hose company No. 2, C. H. Mallett; foreman hook and ladder company No. 1, P. G. Welch; foreman chemical company No. 1, M. E. Huffman; chief, W. H. Tillery; assistant chief, R. H. Rodebaugh; attorney, I. J. Nisley; property men, Al King and Carey Messenger. In 1892 the first two hose carts were purchased, and in 1893 the first hook and ladder truck was purchased. Since that time a chemical engine has been added, a smoke helmet, a search light, and several other things needed to help fight fires.

Mitchell Volunteer Fire Department.—There are 33 members enrolled in this department—27 in hose company, and 6 in chemical company. Financial conditions reported in such a good condition that improvements can be made from time to time as needed, the treasurer's account having gradually increased by the insurance companies remitting their occupation tax promptly. The inclination for the members to keep up this department in prime condition has been greatly aided by the assistance and encouragement of the business men and citizens, all taking interest in the success of the department. Thru the persistent watchfulness and carefulness of the members, two years have passed without a fire, which is considered a good record for a town of 1,000 people. Working equipment consists of 2 carts, 1,000 feet of hose, and 2 chemicals.

North Platte Volunteer Fire Department.—Organized in September, 1887, in four companies, namely: P. H. N. Schlesinger Company No. 1; B. I. Hinman Co. No. 2; Wild West Company No. 3; Buffalo Bill Hook & Ladder Company No. 1. The department was under the direction of Chief John McCabe and Assistant Chief R. L. Graves. The city built three hose houses and furnished very good equipment. Each company had its own officers and held regular monthly meetings. In January, 1911, the city purchased a fire wagon, necessitating hose companies No. 1 and No. 2 to consolidate, namely, Patterson Hose Company No. 1. In the fall of 1913 the city purchased an auto truck and chemical equipment, which is said to be the best of its

kind in the state, and valued at \$6,100. This department now consolidated into one company, claims the distinction of being the best in the state of Nebraska and one of the best in the United States. Officers at the present time are: President, J. R. Basking; vice president, William J. Landgraf; chief, St. Russell; assistant chief, John Jones; secretary, Geo. R. Tighe; treasurer, Fred W. Dick. The social activities of each year include an annual ball and picnic, a Fourth of July celebration—at which time this department competes in races with Gothenburg, Lexington and Kearney and report victory in nearly every event, and the regular monthly meetings, at which a smoker and a Dutch lunch are among the pleasing features. This department is not unmindful of the sick, but respond to the call of the needy, and also observe Decoration Day in the forming of a parade to the cemetery and decorating the graves of deceased members. Among the list of fires at which this department served notably and efficiently is the great North Platte fire in April, 1893 (when 60 residences of the city were destroyed), the big U. P. ice house fire in January, 1906, and the Hinman Garage fire, April 18, 1915, where 20 automobiles were totally destroyed.

Norfolk Fire Department.—Officers comprise the following: President, Matt Shaeffer, Jr.; vice president, E. E. Truelock; secretary, A. J. Pasewalk; treasurer, H. W. Winter; trustees, Ernest Raasch, Dan Klug, John Schelly; chief, V. A. Nenow; assistant chiefs, John Rice, Dan Klug; day fire driver, Louis Novak; night fire driver, A. W. Finkhaus. The equipment consists of one hose wagon and team, one hook and ladder truck, two hand hose carts; one fire helmet, respirators, rubber coats, nozzles and 2500 feet of hose.

Overton Volunteer Fire Department.—Organized in October, 1911, under the direction of Chief G. H. Beltner, who has served in this capacity up to the present time. The work of this department is reported very efficient, and the regular meetings are well attended. Recently the boys suffered a great loss when their club room which had been erected for their use, but at down, with an estimated loss of \$100. Among the social events of the season under the direction of the fire department is a "Firemen's Fall Festival", which is given with no idea of financial gain, but to show the people surrounding the town that fighting fires is not the only accomplishment of the department. The equipment consists of 2 Nott chemical engine and a pair of extension ladders. Officers are as follows: Chief, H. H. Beltner; assistant chief, D. R. Peaker; secretary, Leo A. Rengler; treasurer, Ralph Wallace; captain Co. No. 1, Edward Anderson; assistant captain Co. No. 1, Ray Gobel; captain Co. No. 2, J. M. Pullen; assistant captain Co. No. 2, Tim Ryan; captain hook and ladder No. 1, J. B. Bailey.

Rising City Volunteer Fire Department.—Organized in 1911, and now claimed to be the best little fire department in the state of Nebraska, comprising twenty-two active and enthusiastic members. All good fire fighters, and prompt in answering the call at any time. Officers at the present time are: Chief, W. S. Scott; assistant chief, R. E. Thomas; secretary and treasurer, J. F. Bates. Equipped with one hose cart, two ladders and six fire extinguishers.

Schuyler Fire Department.—The origin of a fire department in Schuyler

dates back to May 14, 1877, when the Star Fire Company was organized. A year and a half later, Nov. 11, 1878, the Rescue Fire Company was organized. On January 13, 1885, the Red Jacket Hook & Ladder Company was organized, and on June 19, 1889, all former companies were reorganized under the name of the Schuyler Fire Department, which is the present name of the department, now having 73 members. The following are the officers: E. F. Klobassa, president; H. C. Smith, vice president; E. E. Ruzicka, secretary; F. W. Shooka, Jr., treasurer; Joseph Severys, Jr., chief engineer; C. C. Watts, assistant chief. The standing committee consists of J. J. Lambrecht, Milo Ballou, C. C. Watts. The foreman and assistant foreman of the different companies are as follows: E. A. Schmid, foreman Chemical Co. No. 1; E. E. Ruzicka, assistant foreman; H. C. Smith, foreman Hook and Ladder Company; L. W. Gohr, assistant foreman; J. J. Lambrecht, foreman Hose Company No. 1; N. C. Jenkins, assistant foreman; Joseph J. Kubik, foreman Hose Co. No. 2; Geo. F. McKenzie, assistant foreman. The equipment of this fire organized department consists of two hose carts, carrying 1,400 feet of hose, one chemical engine and one hook and ladder. Also one racing cart and complete set of harness. This department is comfortably housed in the fine new city hall, the firemen having two large rooms for their exclusive use—one for the apparatus and the other for a meeting room. The latter room is splendidly furnished in mission style of furniture. A running team composed of members of this department, altho a new organization, has won several purses, and with a little more practice will undoubtedly be one of the fastest teams in the state.

Verdigris Volunteer Fire Department.—Three years ago, March 12, 1912, the desire for organized fire protection resulted in the enrollment of volunteers, and at this time 43 is the number of active members which make up one of the best departments in the state. The officers of the Verdigris Fire Department are at present: Chief, Frank Drassal; assistant chief, O. E. Braun; secretary, W. A. Bruce; treasurer, L. J. Bartak. About \$1200 has been invested for equipment by the department, and there is hose and a hose cart beside. Considering the age of this organization they are well equipped. It has in its possession a chemical, 40-gallon, hose cart, 1000 feet of hose, a hook and ladder truck fully equipped and 6 Pyrenes. The town board has the credit of treating this flourishing department very royally and together with that body and the commercial club they are working hand in hand for a bigger and better department. Several informal banquets held during July and August (spring chicken time) were enjoyed by the members.

Scottsbluff Volunteer Fire Department.—Officers are: F. G. Warrick, president; W. Scott, chief; Dan E. Ayers, secretary and treasurer. Department consists of 23 active members, who readily respond to the alarms. 3 hose carts, 1,000 feet of hose, 1 hook and ladder wagon well equipped, comprise the materials which this department owns. Maintenance received by this department comes from collections of \$5 per annum from the companies writing fire insurance.

University Place Volunteer Fire Department.—The University Place (Continued on last page)

Alliance, Nebraska, November 13, 1915.

INVITATION

To the members of the N. S. V. F. A., and to all members of Volunteer Fire Departments in the State of Nebraska:

The Annual Convention of the Nebraska State Volunteer Firemen's Association will be held in Crawford, Nebr., on January 18th, 19th and 20th, 1916.

The Alliance Fire Department and the Commercial Club of Alliance extend a cordial invitation to all delegates to this annual convention to come to Alliance on the day following the Convention in Crawford, which will be Friday, January 21st, 1916.

The Alliance Fire Department has planned a reception and a good programme for all delegates who come to Alliance, consisting of auto rides, shows, athletic entertainment and smoker, and, boys, we can sure do it right when it comes to entertaining, because that is part of our business, and the Commercial Club and the business men of Alliance are the best on the map and are behind us in whatever we do.

Some of the Brother Firemen in the state visited Alliance for probably the first time when Alliance had the annual convention several years ago, and this probably has been the last time they have visited Alliance, too, but all delegates are urged to stop over with us a day after the convention in Crawford. Alliance has made many improvements since the convention was in Alliance, and we are proud of them and want every one to see them when in Alliance.

Some of the fire departments in the state may go to Crawford in special cars, but they can route them via Alliance on the return trip, and stop over one day. Some of the fire departments may go via the Chicago and Northwestern, both ways, but if such be the case, they can make arrangements very easily for the car to lay over in Crawford on Friday, and come to Alliance and spend one day, and leave here on No. 41 Saturday morning, and this way will arrive home but one day later.

Mayor Romig and Mr. Guthrie will be on hand to help entertain all the delegates, so, boys, let us see all of you in Alliance on FRIDAY, JANUARY 21st, 1915. When you leave your home town for the Convention, be sure to plan on staying in Alliance this one day.

Hoping to see you all in Alliance on this date, and wishing the N. S. V. F. A. the best of success and prosperity, and wishing you all a Merry New Year, we remain,

Fraternally yours,

G. J. HAND, T. P. ROLFSON, LEE BASYE, L. E. PILKINGTON, G. H. ELLIS,

Committee on Entertainment.